

Lights rise on a small restaurant.

Center stage is a long table with a white tablecloth draping to the floor. There are plates and glasses on the top.

Seated at the table's ends with menus open are MARTY and EMMA.

GREG is seated in a center chair facing the audience from the opposite side of the same table.

A PATRON sits in the corner at a smaller round table, also with a long tablecloth.

A HOST is positioned stage right by the restaurant exit. There is also a kitchen entrance on the opposite side.

EMMA

This restaurant is killer. Look...Alaskan Cod over rice with orange spears.

GREG

Place looks expensive.

EMMA

Anything for my big brother! You don't come to town very often. My treat.

MARTY

You don't have to pay --

EMMA

Don't worry. I got it. Starts me off on a good foot with your girlfriend.

GREG

Well, Emma...I guess...

Hush.

MARTY

GREG holds MARTY's hand.

GREG

We're...

EMMA
(Guessing, over the moon)
Getting married!

Pause.

GREG

Pregnant.

Pause.

EMMA
(Realizing)
Oh, shit! There's shrimp on the menu. You can't eat, uh,
uh, fish or something, when... Shit.

MARTY

No, it's fine --

EMMA
I'll get our waiter. He'll have to know, uh that, and advise
us on what you can, can...
(Signaling to no one)
Waiter!

MARTY

I can eat fish. All kinds of fish. Don't worry about it.

The WAITER enters from kitchen.

EMMA

Waiter! Here --

WAITER

Yes.

EMMA

My brother's girl...she's...what do you recommend, shoot, um, if a girl is...

GREG

Emma, she can eat anything.

EMMA

Pregnant, pregnant. That's what I meant to say.

WAITER

Well congratulations, Miss.

GREG

There're no restrictions with fish, right?

MARTY

(Inspecting menu)

There's plenty on the menu that doesn't have fish --

EMMA

Oh, oh! I'm such an idiot!

(Rising, crosses to GREG, hugs him)

This is terrific news! Fuck the fish! Fuck the fucking fish!

(Hugs Marty)

You're going to have a BABY! Ha! So fucking cool!

WAITER

Let me have the kitchen send out some champagne for the table, on the house.

HOST makes a face at the WAITER, but smiles when the others glance his way.

WAITER

I'll be back in a moment to take your orders. And I'll ask the cooks about the fish.

The WAITER exits.

EMMA sits back down.

The PATRON raises his glass in salute, is acknowledged by the adjoining table, and then keeps eating.

EMMA

So! Boy or girl.

MARTY

We don't know yet, we --

GREG

Marty sees the doctor next week.

GREG appears distracted by something and keeps looking down.

GREG (Continued)

Ah, yes. So next week. The old Ultra. I will finally get to see the woman-I-love's innards.

GREG again stops speaking and leans down, looking towards the floor, his bottom half completely hidden by the tablecloth.

GREG (Continued)

Emma.

EMMA

Yes, Greg.

GREG

Is there a reason this restaurant only has four customers on a Friday night?

EMMA

What do you mean?

GREG

Rats or something?

EMMA

Rats! Pu-shaw!

MARTY

What is it, Greg?

GREG tries to lift the tablecloth on his side, but there's too much fabric.

GREG

I don't want to disturb the place settings. But I think there's a -- Marty, that's not your legs?

MARTY

Under the table? No.

GREG

I think there's a, a dog under the table. It brushed my leg.

EMMA

Dog?

MARTY

Get your legs out from under then.

GREG

It's my feet, actually, but something brushed me through the tablecloth.

GREG begins to bustle the tablecloth from where he sits.

EMMA

Don't, be careful.

GREG starts to scream!

Something has got him by the legs and is pulling him under the table. He's in severe pain and within seconds is swallowed up by the tablecloth and disappears.

As this happens:

EMMA (Continued)

(Standing)

It's not funny! It's not funny! Stop it!

MARTY

(Standing)

Greg! What's wrong! What's happening!

The PATRON rushes and tries to grab GREG's hand, the last flailing part of him before he's gone.

The HOST looks frozen in horror.

At the front of the table, so the audience can see, the white tablecloth is splattered from the inside with copious amounts of blood.

The fringe ruffles with animalistic fury, then quiets.

Pause.

Everyone stares down at the table.

The WAITER and a DISHWASHER appear at the kitchen door.

WAITER

We heard screams!

From underneath the table -- a bloodied hand darts out, right at the front of the audience.

MARTY

Oh my God, Greg...

MARTY, thinking it's a rescue, grabs the hand and pulls it free -- it's severed and dripping blood. She screams and is splattered as she tosses it away.

Everyone screams then settles, breathing heavy.

EMMA

(Soft)

He said there was an animal under the table.

HOST

(To DISHWASHER)

Call the police. Call the police! And no one else come out of the kitchen!

The DISHWASHER exits.

The HOST approaches slowly.

From under the table, they hear chomping and slurping.

PATRON

He's eating him!

EMMA

(Hysterical)

It's a joke, it's a joke.

WAITER

Someone's got to go under there. He may be alive!

They all look to each other. No one moves.

EMMA

Greg! Greg! Answer me!

Just the sounds.

The PATRON returns to his table and picks up his steak knife. The other see this and follow suit.

WAITER

I'll get the butcher knife.

The WAITER returns with an imposing knife. The eyes of the others clearly nominate him due to this weapon. He swallows and moves in.

Gently, slowly, he reaches for the tablecloth.

PATRON

No, don't take it off.

WAITER

I'm just going to look.

The HOST collects EMMA and MARTY.

HOST

Get outside. Run. You shouldn't be here.

EMMA

I'm staying!

MARTY

No, no. I have to see if he's alive!

The WAITER lifts the corner of the tablecloth. He creates a small hole so he can see.

Twitching, he makes an awful face.

WAITER

(Repulsed)
Oh, God.

HOST

What is it?

WAITER

He's dead. He's all in pieces.

EMMA and MARTY gasp and cry.

PATRON

(Soft)
Do you see it?

WAITER

Wait. I can't...

He moves in closer to the chairs and raises the tablecloth a few inches more.

WAITER

Wait. Yes. There. *That's no dog.*

Suddenly, a leathery, deformed hand reaches out and grabs the WAITER's hand. The hand pulls him quickly under the table, which shakes. Dishes crash!

Screams and blood!

Body parts, meat chunks fly out from under the table!

Blood soaks everyone.

As it settles down to just the alien sound of chomping and eating, there is a long, long pause as everyone looks at everyone else and the carnage around them.

Long pause.

Lights fade slowly.

Curtain.